

September 18, 2015

Springfield Community Aid Program Proposal

“Community Help Easing Troubled Times” CHETT

This program proposal is the result of a citizen inquiry from Springfield citizen Chester (Chet) Martin, a Springfield area veteran, who contacted the Springfield police regarding the ability to contribute funds to the Springfield Police Department to be used by officers to help VETS and others in need of temporary assistance in circumstances of crisis or critical need. Chet referenced a similar program model used by EPD. The information below is provided as reference to that EPD program as a potential model for a similar program here in Springfield. EPD appears to run their charitable donation program as a 503(c).

EPD Model and History:

Several years ago, the City of Eugene joined in a citizen initiated partnership with the University Fellowship Church (UFC) in Eugene with the help of Police Chaplain, Pastor Brett Gilchrist. This partnership began as a simple effort to help us assist community members in need at times of crisis. UFC members donated thousands of dollars in food vouchers, gas vouchers, and money set aside for lodging assistance. The food vouchers and gas vouchers were used to help community members, and even to help officers from outside agencies who volunteered their time to assist EPD in the wake of the Jerry Webber's and Chris Kilcullen police officer deaths.

The purpose of the EPD partnership with UFC was to provide resources to meet the needs of the most vulnerable in the community. It is intended that funds from the account be used for victims of crime, those displaced by crime or critical incident (including innocent family members of perpetrators as well), or people in the community with little hope or few options. In the past few years the UFC funds have been used or contemplated by EPD to provide meals, lodging, transportation, suicide/crime scene damage repair, and other emergency assistance to these groups with great success.

To access the UFC funds, EPD personnel simply contact a sergeant or watch commander, and have them use their purchasing card to address the immediate need. The sergeant or WC then completes a donation form, and reconciles their purchase to use UFC funds. There are many circumstances outside those mentioned where the use of such funds may be appropriate and EPD evaluates those circumstances on a case by case basis.

In the years since it's inception at EPD, their successful program has been supplemented by other churches and community donors .

Springfield's Pilot Project Proposal:

The established EPD model appears to meet the needs addressed by Chester Martin in this case. While there will be emphasis upon helping veterans, the intent of the project would be that officers retain the discretion to determine those in need and implicate the donations as needed. Sergeants and above can authorize P-card expenses for fuel, food, lodging or related short term expenses in order to meet critical need. P-card expenses will be reconciled via the charitable donation fund and those records maintained for records keeping purposes. The management of the CHETT pilot program will fall to the Support Services Lieutenant.